

**Statement of Marianne Lamont Horinko
Nominated to be Assistant Administrator,
Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

Before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee

September 21, 2001

Mr. Chairman, Senator Smith, and distinguished members of the Committee. Thank you for the privilege of coming before you today. I am honored that President Bush nominated me to be Assistant Administrator for the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) at the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). I believe that all of the public and private sector positions that I have been fortunate enough to hold in the past have set the stage for this opportunity to serve our country. If confirmed, you have my word that I will bring thoughtful deliberation, integrity, and enthusiasm to the challenges that loom ahead.

I am especially proud to introduce my husband, Tim Horinko, my children, Kaitlyn and Hunter, my parents, John and Johanna Maccini, and my in-laws, Terry and Larry Horinko. Finally, I would also like to thank my many colleagues and friends who have given so generously of their support and friendship— not just today, but always.

I am particularly attracted to this opportunity to serve EPA because, thanks to my father, I probably have some groundwater running through my veins. My dad is a geologist who worked for many years as a university professor and career civil servant at the National Science Foundation. He taught me to love science, and by example, showed me that public service was not merely a job, but a higher calling. My mother provided strong support and reinforcement of our love of science and curiosity about our natural environment. Their great respect for the natural treasures of our lands impressed me deeply, and it is because of their early influence that I chose the protection of the environment as my own profession.

In my testimony today, I would like to share some of the key themes and approaches I would bring to this position, if confirmed. They include: innovation, information sharing, and partnerships.

One of my principal observations is that there has been a sea change in Federal attitudes and approaches to managing waste since I left EPA. The old command and control method has been supplemented, in some measure, by partnerships and consensus building as the means of cooperative problem solving.

The expansion of Brownfields approaches to other OSWER programs is a symbol of that new way of thinking, and it carries the message of productive future land uses as determined by local communities to all of our waste efforts.

An example of that innovation is the emerging linkage between environmental cleanup and community revitalization. The Brownfields story is all about a new way of doing the government's business. Like Governor Whitman and President Bush, I wholeheartedly support passage of Brownfields legislation during this session of Congress. With a strong Brownfields bill and working in tandem with State and local brown fields efforts, there is no limit to what we can accomplish.

Significant challenges face the EPA workforce. Much has been made about the baby-boomer retirement outflow, and the need for a newly energized and well-equipped workforce to address the challenges of the future. We need to build a workforce that cherishes diversity, rewards innovative thinking and creates an atmosphere where programmatic risk-taking is encouraged.

I think that there is also great opportunity on the information side of the equation. More emphasis needs to be placed on ensuring that all stakeholders have access to clear and understandable information about the health and environmental risks they face. Policymaking cannot and should not exist in a vacuum. I believe that the people who create federal regulations should be required to meet face-to-face with the citizens whose lives they impact. What better way to experience, first hand, how the policies we make here in Washington, can affect the comfort and quality of life in our towns and cities across the United States?

People outside the agency tell me that it's impossible to figure out who does what in government in order to get simple answers to their questions. Through partnerships and collaboration, the sharing of information and practices among our cleanup programs will reduce the inconsistencies that often plague our stakeholders.

If confirmed, I plan to work closely with our State and Tribal partners to ensure that all cleanups are both protective of human health and the environment, as well as implemented with an eye toward community revitalization.

Finally, given the tragic events of September 11, I feel that I must take a moment to talk about a key role for the OSWER Assistant Administrator as EPA's lead on counter-terrorism. I spent virtually all of that fateful day with Governor Whitman and the outstanding staff at our Emergency Operations Center on Pennsylvania Avenue. Amid an ocean of chaos, we observed, with wonder and awe, an island of calm, steady professionals who make up EPA's emergency response team. These individuals are not only technically and substantively competent, but have pulled together an organized approach to dealing with the horror of chemical, biological or air attacks on our citizens. When terror struck that Tuesday, they sprung into action and made certain that the public health and safety of our people were protected and assured. They are truly the unsung heroes of our government. If confirmed, I pledge to give our counter-terrorism activities the highest priority, and to do all that I can to make their jobs easier.

I realize that I have not even scraped the surface of all the issues and challenges that await EPA's Assistant Administrator of Solid Waste and Emergency Response. I can assure this committee, however, that if confirmed, I will tackle each one with enthusiasm and equanimity— and that I

will work hard to meet these challenges in a fair, balanced, open and honorable fashion. I look forward to working closely with the Congress and especially the Members of this Committee on the stewardship of our environment. Thank you for considering me for this position.

###

